Cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

2864. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to Central horticultural experts, cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants as inter-crops not only supplements the income of the farmers, but also help in boosting exports and meeting the ever growing domestic demand;

(b) whether due to the expansion of area under food and commercial crops, there has been a considerable depletion of harbal wealth;

(c) whether many of the herbs are in the process of becoming extinct;

(d) if so, whether in view of the present day shift towards the Indian systems of medicine and in this context of 'back to nature' health care any plan has been made by Government to preserve the valuable medicinal and aromatic plants and their cultivation developed in order to meet the demand of industries and export;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, thhe reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a Centrally Sponsorded scheme for Development of medicinal and aromatic plants in the VIII Plan with an outlay of Rs. 5.00 crores, to conserve herbal wealth in different agro-climatic zones through establishing herbal gardens, nurseries for multiplication and distribution of planting material, demonstration-cum-seed production, plots, etc.

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is also implementing a scheme since 1990-91 for cultivation of medicinal plants financing Government and autonomous institutions. Under the scheme extinct medicinal plants and the plants of daily requirement are selected for cultivation.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is providing a strong Research support through its, "All India Coordinated Research Project on Medicinal & Aromatic Plants" operating at 9 centres in different State Agriculture Universities. This Project is involved in developing new varieties and improved production techniques and their dissemination.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is also providing considerable support for R and D activities of these plants through Central Institute of Medicinal & Aromatic Plants, Lucknow & Regional Research Laboratories at Jammu, Jorhat and Bhuvaneshwar.

Agri-Expo Exhibition

2865. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign companies which participated in the Agri-Expo Exhibition recently concluded in Delhi;

(b) the number of Indian companies which participated in the same;

(c) the number of persons who visited the exhibition; and

(d) the amount of expenditure on the Exhibition alongwith the outcome of the Exhibition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Forty one foreign companies from four countries. i.e. Israel, Nepal Nethherlands and the U.S.A. participated.

(b) One Hundred and Fifty Indian Companies participated in the Fair.

(c) About Ten Lakh persons visited the exhibition.